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Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General

Follow-up to and implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action

National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights*

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 27/18, which requested the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of that resolution. The report, which covers the period from September 2014 to August 2016, contains information on the activities undertaken by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to establish and strengthen national human rights institutions; cooperation between those institutions and the international human rights system; and support provided by OHCHR to the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions — the former International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights — and relevant regional networks. The report should be read in conjunction with the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of Global Alliance in accrediting national institutions in compliance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) (A/HRC/33/36).

* The annexes to the present report are circulated as received, in the language of submission only.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 27/18, in which it requested the Secretary-General to report to the Council at its thirty-third session on the implementation of that resolution.

2. The present report outlines progress achieved since the previous relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/HRC/27/39), between September 2014 and August 2016. It should be read in conjunction with the report of the Secretary-General to the Human Rights Council on the activities of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions — the former International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights — in accrediting national institutions in compliance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) (A/HRC/33/36).

3. In resolution 27/18, the Human Rights Council reiterated the important role of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in assisting the development of independent and effective national human rights institutions in accordance with the Paris Principles. It also recognized the potential for strengthened and complementary cooperation among OHCHR, the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, regional coordinating committees of national institutions and national institutions. The Council also emphasized the role of independent national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights in working together with their governments to ensure full respect for human rights at the national level, including by contributing, as appropriate, to follow-up to the recommendations of international human rights mechanisms.

4. The Council encouraged the Secretary-General to continue to give high priority to Member States' requests for assistance in the establishment and strengthening of national human rights institutions in accordance with the Paris Principles.

II. Support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to national human rights institutions

A. Advisory services

5. The National Institutions, Regional Mechanisms and Civil Society Section of OHCHR is responsible for the coordination of the activities of the Office to establish and/or strengthen national human rights institutions. Together with OHCHR field presences, other United Nations entities, in particular the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and regional networks of national human rights institutions, OHCHR assists governments in establishing national human rights institutions and/or contributes to building the capacity of such institutions. In that context, OHCHR works closely with regional intergovernmental organizations, academic institutions, civil society organizations and other stakeholders.

6. OHCHR provides national human rights institutions and other stakeholders with technical and legal assistance, particularly regarding constitutional and legislative frameworks relating to the establishment, nature, functions, powers and responsibilities of institutions. It also conducts and supports comparative analyses, technical cooperation projects, needs assessments and evaluation missions to establish and strengthen the capacity of national human rights institutions to discharge their mandate effectively.

7. During the period under review, OHCHR provided advice and/or assistance on the strengthening of human rights institutions in Afghanistan, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Barbados, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Chile, Colombia, the Congo, Croatia, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Georgia, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iraq, Ireland, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Rwanda, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, South Africa, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and the State of Palestine, as well as Kosovo.[1]

8. OHCHR also provided assistance to activities aimed at the establishment of national human rights institutions in Angola, Bahrain, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, the Comoros, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Fiji, the Gambia, Guinea, Jamaica, Kuwait, Lesotho, Malta, the Niger, Norway, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Somalia, South Sudan, Swaziland, Turkey, Turkmenistan, the United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

I. Africa

9. During the period under review, the OHCHR regional offices for Central, East, Southern and West Africa, the OHCHR country offices in Burundi, Guinea and Uganda, the human rights advisers to the United Nations country teams in Chad, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, the Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, and the human rights components of the United Nations missions in the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan and the Sudan (in Darfur) continued, in consultation with the National Institutions, Regional Mechanisms and Civil Society Section, to provide advice on and assistance in the establishment and/or strengthening of national human rights institutions in Africa.

(a) Legislative advice

10. In 2014 and 2015, OHCHR provided legislative advice on and financial support in drafting a new enabling law for the National Human Rights Commission of Senegal.

11. OHCHR provided advice and guidance with regard to the laws establishing national human rights institutions in Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Chad, the Gambia and Somalia, and to improve the existing law in Mauritius.

12. In 2015, in Madagascar, OHCHR supported advocacy and awareness-raising activities on the law adopted on the establishment of the national human rights institution.

(b) Capacity-building

13. In 2014 and 2015, OHCHR provided technical assistance to a UNDP-funded project that supported the National Human Rights Commission of Nigeria in conducting investigations and developing a mechanism for systematic human rights monitoring and reporting. Support was also provided to the Commission to monitor human rights issues in the context of the electoral process.

[1] All references to Kosovo in the present report, whether to the territory, institutions or population, are to be construed in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

14. In November 2014, OHCHR provided technical advice to the Human Rights Commission of Swaziland in the context of a human rights needs assessment mission.

15. In Burundi, OHCHR provided advice and support to the National Independent Human Rights Commission, including for the establishment of its regional offices and training for its new members, elected in April 2015.

16. In August 2015, in cooperation with the Human Rights Commission of Zambia, OHCHR organized a workshop on economic, social and cultural rights. OHCHR and the Commission also conducted joint activities on sexual health and reproductive rights within the framework of a partnership between them and the United Nations Population Fund.

17. In August 2015, OHCHR organized a two-day training for the National Human Rights Commission of Guinea on the role of national human rights institutions in promoting and protecting human rights. OHCHR also organized training sessions for members of the Commission and its staff on human rights monitoring in electoral contexts and human rights treaty bodies.

18. In September 2015, OHCHR and UNDP co-organized a training workshop for the Human Rights Commission of Zimbabwe on engaging with international human rights mechanisms and monitoring places of detention.

19. In 2015, OHCHR organized field trips and a three-day workshop for the Commission on Human Rights and Good Governance of the United Republic of Tanzania on the rights of indigenous peoples. It also provided support to the institution on reporting under the universal periodic review.

20. OHCHR provided support to the National Human Rights Commission of Senegal on international human rights mechanisms and alternative reporting for the universal periodic review and treaty bodies.

21. In South Africa, OHCHR developed a research and advocacy project on the economic empowerment of women, in partnership with the Human Rights Commission and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).

22. In 2015, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan trained the South Sudan Human Rights Commission on the universal periodic review and specific human rights issues, including on women's rights. The Mission, in cooperation with the Commission, carried out promotional activities on different human rights issues, including women's rights and gender-based violence.

23. In the Niger, OHCHR provided advice and technical support to the national human rights institution to develop its 2014-2017 strategic plan. It also trained the national human rights institution on the universal periodic review and human rights monitoring in connection with the elections.

24. In Uganda, OHCHR trained the Human Rights Commission on different issues, including climate change, business and human rights and human rights monitoring in the context of elections. OHCHR provided support to the Commission to develop and implement a programme to document serious violations of human rights that occurred during the conflicts in Uganda between 1987 and 2006. OHCHR also supported the Commission in developing a database to take stock of all recommendations from the international and regional human rights mechanisms for Uganda.

25. In 2015, the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office organized workshops and training for the National Human Rights Commission of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on human rights principles, mandate and independence, complaint procedures and investigations. In April 2016, OHCHR, in cooperation with that Office, organized

workshops on strategic planning and complaints, investigation and conciliation management, with a view of building the capacity of the Commission.

26. In Sierra Leone, OHCHR provided support to the National Human Rights Council on the universal periodic review, sexual and gender-based violence and persons with disabilities, and organized a workshop on business and human rights in May 2016.

27. In Malawi, OHCHR trained the Human Rights Commission, including on business and human rights, human rights monitoring and engagement with the United Nations human rights system.

28. In Kenya, OHCHR provided technical and financial support to the National Commission on Human Rights, including on counter-terrorism, investigations, monitoring of places of detention, protection of human rights defenders, follow-up to recommendations from international human rights mechanisms, business, and reproductive rights.

2. Americas and the Caribbean

29. During the period under review, the OHCHR regional offices for South and Central America, the country offices in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico, the human rights advisers to the United Nations country teams in the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Panama and Paraguay, and the human rights component of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, continued to provide advice on and assistance in strengthening national human rights institutions in the Americas and the Caribbean, in consultation with the OHCHR National Institutions, Regional Mechanisms and Civil Society Section.

(a) Legislative advice

30. In 2015, OHCHR provided legislative advice on the establishment of a national human rights institution in Jamaica, as well as training to the staff members of the Office of the Public Defender of Jamaica on international human rights standards and mechanisms.

(b) Capacity-building

31. In Paraguay, OHCHR trained the staff of the Ombudsman institution on the universal periodic review, treaty bodies and special procedures.

32. In October 2014, OHCHR conducted training for the national human rights institution of Peru on follow-up to universal periodic review recommendations.

33. In November 2014, in partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the national human rights institution of Chile, OHCHR conducted a workshop for civil society organizations on the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure. In 2015, also in partnership with the national human rights institution of Chile, OHCHR organized a seminar on alternative reporting to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and a regional seminar on business and human rights, and launched a joint publication on social protests and human rights. In August 2015, other activities were jointly carried out on sexual and reproductive rights, and on social protests, as well as training on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex rights.

34. In December 2014, OHCHR collaborated with the national human rights institution of Argentina on the operationalization of a guide on combating racial and ethnic discrimination, and to deliver training on indigenous peoples' rights to Guarani communities.

35. In December 2014, OHCHR held a workshop in Montevideo to enhance the engagement of the national human rights institution of Uruguay with the international human rights system.

36. In December 2014, OHCHR organized a regional workshop in Brasilia to promote the establishment of a national human rights institution in Brazil.

37. In October 2015, OHCHR provided support to the Office for the Protection of Citizens in Haiti for the development of its strategic and action plans for 2016-2019. It also provided support on information technology for the management of cases on alleged human rights violations. In February 2016, OHCHR developed two quick-impact projects, funded by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, to provide sanitary infrastructures for six regional offices of the Protector of Citizens.

38. In 2015, OHCHR and the National Human Rights Institution of Guatemala issued a joint report to assess the implementation of the Government's strategy to combat malnutrition. OHCHR provided support and training to the National Human Rights Institution on various topics, including human rights in the context of elections, business and human rights, food security, the rights of indigenous peoples, labour rights, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex rights, and preventive detention.

39. In Panama, OHCHR provided support to the National Human Rights Institution in preventing and addressing gender domestic violence.

40. In El Salvador, OHCHR supported the National Human Rights Institution in organizing a public forum on human rights defenders.

3. Asia and the Pacific

41. During the period under review, the OHCHR regional offices for South-East Asia and the Pacific, the human rights advisers to the United Nations country teams in Bangladesh, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste and the human rights component of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan continued to provide advice and assistance for the establishment or strengthening of national human rights institutions, in consultation with the National Institutions, Regional Mechanisms and Civil Society Section.

(a) Legislative advice

42. In 2015, OHCHR provided advice on pending amendments to the law on the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand.

(b) Capacity-building

43. In December 2014, OHCHR facilitated a workshop organized by the Malaysian Human Rights Commission on deaths in police custody.

44. In January 2015, OHCHR, UNDP and the Asia-Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions conducted a capacity assessment of the Office of the Ombudsperson for Human Rights and Justice of Timor-Leste. A joint project of OHCHR and UNDP provided capacity support to the institution to train the national police on human rights standards relating to policing, detention, use of force and the rights of specific groups. Through this project, technical support was also provided in case management, investigations, mediation and human resources. In October 2014, OHCHR trained the staff of the Office of the Ombudsperson on economic, social and cultural rights and on international human rights standards. OHCHR also conducted five briefing sessions on specific rights for the staff of the Office of the Ombudsperson in March and April 2016.

45. In November 2015, OHCHR, UNDP and the Asia-Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions organized a high-level dialogue with the members of the re-established Fiji Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission. In 2016, OHCHR organized training for the commission on detention monitoring and treaty bodies.

46. In December 2015, OHCHR trained the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission on international standards related to preventing discrimination and to minority rights. In June 2016, OHCHR and the Commission organized a workshop for senior staff of State institutions on minority rights.

47. In Samoa, OHCHR provided support to the Ombudsman institution on the universal periodic review and treaty bodies. It also supported the Ombudsman in drafting a report on the rights of persons with disabilities and developing an internal database on complaint handling and human rights monitoring.

48. In Afghanistan, in cooperation with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, OHCHR assisted the Independent Human Rights Commission to develop 34 provincial-level roadmaps for peace and to host a round table on civil society space in July 2016. OHCHR and the Mission also provided training and advice to the Commission in preventing and addressing violence against women and honour killings.

4. Europe and Central Asia

49. During the period under review, the OHCHR regional offices for Europe and Central Asia, the OHCHR Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, the human rights advisers in the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as well as the southern Caucasus and the human rights component of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo continued to provide advice and assistance for the establishment and/or strengthening of human rights institutions, in consultation with the National Institutions, Regional Mechanisms and Civil Society Section.

(a) Legislative advice

50. In 2015 and 2016, OHCHR provided advice on draft amendments to the enabling law of the Ombudsman of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

51. In 2015 and 2016, OHCHR provided advice on the draft laws establishing national human rights institutions in Malta and Turkmenistan.

Capacity-building

52. In February 2015, OHCHR participated in a joint United Nations mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina to assess the status and independence of the Ombudsman institution and the overall context in which it operates, focusing on its financial independence, reporting, organizational structure and human rights mandate, with a view to strengthening its compliance with the Paris Principles.

53. In October 2015, OHCHR organized a workshop for the Commissioner for Human Rights of Kazakhstan on follow-up to recommendations from international human rights mechanisms. OHCHR supported the establishment of the national preventive mechanism through training for its members on international standards.

54. In December 2015, in Belgrade, OHCHR participated in an international conference organized by the Protector of Citizens (Ombudsman) of Serbia, and made a presentation on human rights of migrants and refugees. OHCHR has been engaged in supporting follow-up

to the Thessaloniki Action Plan of national human rights institutions in Europe on the human rights of migrants and refugees.

55. In 2015, OHCHR assisted in the development of a UNDP project to enhance the capacity of the national human rights institution in Turkey.

56. OHCHR organized six workshops and two conferences for the federal and regional ombudspersons in the Russian Federation, including on United Nations human rights mechanisms, international standards for national human rights institutions, the rights of indigenous peoples, women's rights and non-discrimination. In 2015, OHCHR organized a pilot training session for the staff members of the Ombudsman of the Russian Federation on effectively handling claims of discrimination. It also organized a workshop for regional human rights commissioners with a view to developing an environment free from discrimination in football.

57. OHCHR provided support to the institution of the Ombudsman of Kyrgyzstan, including for its 2015 work-plan, fundraising and advocacy. Support was provided also to strengthen its capacity to conduct human rights monitoring and produce analytical reports. As a result, the Ombudsman made its first submission to a United Nations treaty body (the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights).

58. In Tajikistan, OHCHR provided support to the pilot national preventive mechanism — the Monitoring Group — under the auspices of the Ombudsman institution. It thus contributed to strengthening the awareness and capacity of this mechanism by organizing discussions on its recommendations. OHCHR also supported visits of the Monitoring Group to detention centres and organized two workshops for its staff members and for those of the Ombudsman institution on documenting torture according to the Istanbul Protocol.

59. In April 2016, in partnership with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo and the Council of Europe, OHCHR provided training to the Ombudsman of Kosovo on human rights indicators, aimed at supporting the institution to monitor implementation of the laws on protection from discrimination and on gender equality.

60. In April 2016, OHCHR trained the national human rights institution of the Republic of Moldova on the Paris Principles, human rights monitoring and investigation, and international human rights mechanisms.

5. Middle East and North Africa

61. During the period under review, the OHCHR regional office for the Middle East and North Africa, the United Nations Human Rights Training and Documentation Centre for South-West Asia and the Arab Region, the OHCHR offices in Mauritania, Tunisia, Yemen and the State of Palestine and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq and the United Nations Support Mission in Libya continued to provide advice and assistance for the establishment and/or strengthening of national human rights institutions in the Middle East and North Africa, in consultation with the National Institutions, Regional Mechanisms and Civil Society Section.

(a) Legislative advice

62. In 2016, OHCHR provided advice on a draft law for the establishment of a national human rights institution in Tunisia, including by training the members of the drafting committee on relevant international standards. OHCHR also facilitated five consultations at the national and regional level to discuss the establishment of a human rights institution.

(b) Capacity-building

63. In November 2014, OHCHR provided training to the National Council for Human Rights of Egypt on human rights indicators.

64. In 2015, OHCHR trained the National Human Rights Commission of Mauritania on the United Nations human rights mechanisms, particularly on drafting reports for the universal periodic review and treaty bodies.

65. The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq and the United Nations Office for Project Services provided 23 training sessions and workshops to build the capacity of the Independent High Commission for Human Rights of Iraq, including on women's rights, minorities rights, human rights investigations and reporting, prison monitoring, protection of civilians in armed conflict, raising human rights awareness, and procurement and public budgeting.

66. In the State of Palestine, OHCHR trained the staff of the Independent Commission for Human Rights in monitoring economic, social and cultural rights and administration of justice. OHCHR also supported the Commission in organizing a meeting on women's rights and delivering several training sessions, including for law enforcement personnel.

B. Support to regional and subregional initiatives by national human rights institutions

1. Africa

67. In April 2015, the OHCHR Regional Office for Southern Africa and the South African Human Rights Commission co-organized subregional training for national human rights institutions on business and human rights in the extractive industry.

2. Americas and the Caribbean

68. In September 2014, in Chile, the OHCHR Regional Office for South America convened a workshop bringing together national human rights institutions from across the region to exchange good practices on monitoring social protests. In Chile, OHCHR conducted training for the national human rights institutions of the region on follow-up to universal periodic review recommendations.

69. In October 2015, OHCHR and the University of San Martín in Argentina organized a workshop for the national human rights institutions of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Peru and Uruguay, focusing on the implementation of universal periodic review recommendations.

3. Asia and the Pacific

70. In August 2015, the national human rights institutions of Fiji, New Zealand and Samoa participated in the launch of the Free and Equal campaign[7] in the Pacific, organized by OHCHR. In November 2015, those institutions also participated in a regional workshop on universal periodic review, which OHCHR organized in Suva.

[7] Free and Equal campaign is a United Nations global public education campaign for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender equality.

4. Europe and Central Asia

71. The OHCHR Regional Office for Europe organized workshops and continued to provide advice and capacity-building to national human rights institutions in Europe, including on the rights of migrants, persons with disabilities and ethnic minorities.

72. In October 2015, OHCHR provided technical and substantive input in a regional conference organized by the Commissioner for Human Rights of Ukraine on national human rights institutions in conflict and post-conflict situations.

5. Middle East and North Africa

73. In September 2014, the United Nations Human Rights Training and Documentation Centre for South-West Asia and the Arab Region organized a training workshop for 20 national human rights institutions on their role in protecting the rights of individuals deprived of their liberty. In 2015 and 2016, the Centre also trained national human rights institutions on the rights of women in detention, combating hate speech, human trafficking, economic, social and cultural rights, and interaction with the international human rights mechanisms.

C. Contributions to international initiatives supporting national human rights institutions

1. Annual general meetings of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions

74. During the reporting period, OHCHR provided secretariat and technical support to two annual general meetings of the Global Alliance, held in Geneva on 12 and 13 March 2015 and from 21 to 23 March 2016. At the March 2016 meeting, the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights changed its name into the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions.

2. Bureau meetings

75. OHCHR provided secretariat and technical support for four statutory Bureau meetings of the Global Alliance, which were held in Geneva on 11 March 2015 and 21 March 2016, in Johannesburg on 16 and 17 October 2014, and in Merida, Mexico, on 6 and 7 October 2015. The Bureau members discussed their strategic priorities and other organizational issues, and endorsed the reports of the Sub-Committee on Accreditation of March and October 2014, and March and November 2015.

4. Sub-Committee on Accreditation

76. Article 6 of the Statute of the Global Alliance provides that meetings of the Sub-Committee on Accreditation shall be held under the auspices of and in cooperation with OHCHR. Accordingly, OHCHR provided substantive support to four sessions of the Sub-Committee, held in Geneva in October 2014, March and November 2015, and May 2016. The presence of OHCHR at all the meetings of the Sub-Committee is instrumental to attesting the compliance of the accreditation process with the established rules of procedure, and contributes to its transparency, fairness and rigorousness.

5. Fellowship programme for staff of national human rights institutions

77. OHCHR maintains its fellowship programme for the staff of A-status national human rights institutions. Initiated in 2008, the programme is designed to provide fellows with information on, and working experience with the international human rights system,

and to familiarize them with the work of OHCHR with national human rights institutions. During the period under review, fellows from the human rights institutions of Albania, Costa Rica, Egypt, Indonesia, Malawi, Malaysia, Portugal and the Russian Federation participated in the programme.

6. International conferences

78. From 8 to 10 October 2015, in Merida, Mexico, OHCHR, the Mexican National Human Rights Commission and the Global Alliance organized the Twelfth International Conference of National Human Rights Institutions on "The Sustainable Development Goals: what role for national human rights institutions?". The Merida declaration on the role of national human rights institutions in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted at this conference.

III. Cooperation between United Nations human rights mechanisms and national human rights institutions

A. Human Rights Council

79. During the reporting period, national human rights institutions were active before and during the sessions of the Council, delivering statements, submitting written documentation, participating in general debates and organizing parallel events and interacting with the special procedures under specific agenda items. A total of 56 institutions participated in Council sessions during the reporting period (see annex I), including 25 through video statements.

1. Universal periodic review

80. During the second cycle of the universal periodic review, the important role that independent national human rights institutions in full compliance with the Paris Principles play in the promotion and protection of human rights was highlighted in most of the reviews. Many States' recommendations requested the establishment of national human rights institutions or advised that their capacity to fully implement their mandates be further strengthened.

81. During the second cycle, A-status institutions continued to share their independent views on the impact of the review on the promotion and protection of human rights, including good practices, challenges and emerging human rights issues. In accordance with the Council's resolution 16/21 adopted in 2011, a summary of the written contributions submitted by A-status institutions was included as a separate section in the summary of information from stakeholders prepared by OHCHR for the second cycle (see annex II).[1]

82. Several A-status institutions further used the opportunity created for them by the Council to intervene immediately after the State under review during the adoption of the outcome, including through a representative of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions or through video statements.

83. Some A-status institutions contributed in writing or via video statements to the general debate under agenda item 6 of the Council, including by sharing mid-term progress reports on the status of the implementation of recommendations.

[1] That document is one of the three documents that form the basis of the review.

84. Given the role that national human rights institutions can play at the national level in follow-up to the universal periodic review and in developing tools to monitor and assess progress in the implementation of recommendations, OHCHR continued to actively support and encourage their participation in the review process.

B. Treaty bodies

85. OHCHR continued to support the participation of national human rights institutions in treaty bodies sessions. The secretariats of the treaty bodies, the National Institutions, Regional Mechanisms and Civil Society Section and the Geneva representative of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions liaised with national human rights institutions prior to each session to encourage them to provide written or oral information, and to attend the sessions. OHCHR also prepared briefings on institutions for the attention of treaty bodies and disseminated relevant recommendations and concluding observations to the institutions concerned.

86. During the reporting period, human rights treaty bodies reviewed 319 States parties, 236 of which had national human rights institutions. Of those 236 institutions, more than 200 interacted with treaty bodies by submitting reports, providing briefings before the review or attending the sessions (see annex III).

87. Treaty bodies have provided national human rights institutions with information notes, statements and advice and tools to facilitate their effective engagement and invited representatives of those institutions to their meetings.

88. In September 2014, the Committee on Enforced Disappearances adopted a paper on its relationship with national human rights institutions to enhance the opportunities for those institutions to engage with the Committee and contribute to its work. The Committee has engaged with the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions in this process.

89. In September 2014, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities held its first meeting with national human rights institutions and independent monitoring frameworks to discuss ways in which monitoring of the Convention at the national and international levels could be mutually reinforced. The Committee subsequently adopted draft guidelines on the establishment of independent monitoring frameworks and their participation in the work of the Committee, during its fifteenth session (29 March-21 April 2016).

IV. Recommendations

A. Recommendations to Member States

90. **Member States are encouraged to establish national human rights institutions compliant with the Paris Principles or to strengthen the structures and independence of existing institutions in order to enable the effective fulfilment of their mandate, taking into account the recommendations of the Sub-Committee on Accreditation of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions and the advice of OHCHR.**

91. **Member States are encouraged to ensure that national human rights institutions are provided with a broad mandate to protect and promote all human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights, and are granted adequate powers of investigation into allegations of human rights violations, including authorization to visit places of deprivation of liberty.**

92. Member States should ensure that national human rights institutions are provided with adequate human and financial resources and operate with the necessary independence, and that they have the capacity to freely propose and manage their own budgets and recruit their own staff members.

93. Member States should ensure the formalization of a clear, transparent and participatory selection and appointment process for members and staff of national human rights institutions.

94. Members and staff of national human rights institutions should enjoy immunity while discharging their functions in good faith in their official capacity. Member States are urged to take measures to protect members and staff of national human rights institutions against threats and harassment. Any alleged reprisal or intimidation against members and staff of institutions, or against individuals who cooperate or seek to cooperate with them, should be promptly and thoroughly investigated, and perpetrators brought to justice.

95. Member States are encouraged to act upon and implement recommendations of national human rights institutions.

96. Member States should continue to provide financial contributions to OHCHR for the latter to sustain high-quality support for the establishment and strengthening of national human rights institutions and to provide secretariat support to the Global Alliance and its Sub-Committee on Accreditation.

B. Recommendations to national human rights institutions

97. National human rights institutions should seek regular and constructive cooperation with relevant State bodies to promote the inclusion of human rights issues in legislation, policies and programmes.

98. National human rights institutions should develop, formalize and maintain cooperation with civil society organizations, and strengthen their capacity to participate meaningfully in the promotion and protection of human rights.

99. In accordance with the Paris Principles, national human rights institutions working in conflict situations or crises are encouraged to be vigilant and proactive in protecting the rights of persons affected.

100. National human rights institutions are encouraged to continue their work towards implementing, in cooperation with key partners, the Merida declaration on the role of national human rights institutions in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted at the Twelfth International Conference of National Human Rights Institutions.

101. National human rights institutions are encouraged to continue to develop and advocate for the development of protective measures and mechanisms for human rights defenders, and to disseminate information thereon.

102. In accordance with the Paris Principles, national human rights institutions are encouraged to continue to engage with the international human rights mechanisms, and to promote the implementation of their recommendations.

103. National human rights institutions are encouraged to continue to advocate for their independent participation in relevant United Nations mechanisms and processes, including the 2030 Agenda.

Annex I

Submissions from national human rights institutions to the Human Rights Council (submitted between September 2014 and February 2016)

Country institution	Agenda	Date
Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions	Agenda item 1 Panel on human rights mainstreaming	February 2016
National Human Rights Council of Morocco	Agenda item 3 Panel on fiftieth anniversary of human rights covenants	March 2016
Human Rights Commissioner of Azerbaijan (Ombudsman)	Agenda item 3 Panel discussion on climate change and right to health	March 2016
	Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide	March 2016
	Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities	March 2016
Red de Instituciones Nacionales para la Promoción y Protección de los Derechos Humanos del Continente Americano	Agenda item 3 Report of the Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment	March 2016
	Agenda item 3 Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders	March 2016
	Agenda item 3 Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities	March 2016
	Agenda item 3 Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food	March 2016
	Agenda item 3 Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children	March 2016
National Human Rights Commission of Greece	Agenda item 3 Annual debate on the rights of persons with disabilities	March 2016
National Human Rights Commission of Mexico on behalf of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions	Agenda item 1 High-level panel on human rights mainstreaming Video statement	March 2016

Country/Institution	Agenda	Date
Ombudsman of the Republic Serbia	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on adequate housing — Mission to Serbia Video statement	March 2016
Scottish Human Rights Commission	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context Video statement	March 2016
Equality and Human Rights Commission of Great Britain (United Kingdom)	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders Video statement	March 2016
National Human Rights Commission of Greece	Agenda item 2 Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of all human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights — mission to Greece Video statement	March 2016
Public Defender of Georgia	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment Video statement	March 2016
Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM)	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism Video statement	March 2016
Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, Working Group Chair — National Human Rights Council of Morocco	Agenda item 3 Report of open-ended intergovernmental working group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights Video statement	March 2016
Commissioner for Fundamental Rights of Hungary	Agenda item 3 Debate on the state of racial discrimination worldwide Video statement	March 2016

Country/Institution	Agenda	Date
Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights	Agenda item 6 Universal periodic review general debate	September 2015
Provedoria for Human Rights and Justice of Timor-Leste	Agenda item 3 Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances	September 2015
European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI)	Agenda item 3 Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons	September 2015
Canadian Human Rights Commission	Agenda item 3 High Commissioner's report on the human rights implications of over-incarceration and overcrowding	September 2015
Defensor del Pueblo Colombia	Agenda item 2 High Commissioner's report (A/HRC/30/28)	September 2015
	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples	September 2015
	Agenda item 2 OHCHR report (A/HRC/30/70)	September 2015
	Agenda item 2 Special Rapporteur's report on the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity (A/HRC/30/68)	September 2015
	Agenda item 2 High Commissioner's report (A/HRC/30/29)	September 2015
Canadian Human Rights Commission	Agenda item 3 Report of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention Video statement	September 2015
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence Video statement	September 2015
National Commission on Human Rights of Kenya	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation Video statement	September 2015
National Human Rights Commission of Korea	Agenda item 3 Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons Video statement	September 2015

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Joint statement — Equality and Human Rights Commission (UK) and Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission	Agenda item 5 Using sport and the Olympic ideal to promote human rights Video statement	September 2015
Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights	Agenda item 10 Interactive dialogue on the High Commissioner's oral update on Ukraine Video statement	September 2015
National Human Rights Commission of Greece	Agenda item 3 Panel on realizing the equal enjoyment of the right to education by every girl	June 2015
Human Rights Commissioner of Azerbaijan (Ombudsman)	Agenda item 3 Panel on eliminating and preventing domestic violence against women and girls	June 2015
National Human Rights Council of Morocco	Agenda item 3 Annual day of discussion on the human rights of women	June 2015
	Agenda item 9 Panel on the effects of terrorism on the enjoyment by all persons of human rights and fundamental freedoms	June 2015
Defensor del Pueblo of Argentina	Agenda item 6 Universal periodic review general debate	June 2015
Procurador de los Derechos Humanos of Guatemala	Agenda item 6 Universal periodic review general debate	June 2015
Commissioner for Fundamental Rights of Hungary	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on minority issues (study on Roma) Video statement	June 2015
Joint statement — Equality and Human Rights Commission (UK) and Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on minority issues (study on Roma) Video statement	June 2015

Country/organization	Agenda item	Date
Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM)	Agenda item 3 Report of Special Rapporteur on the human rights aspects of the victims of trafficking in persons, especially women and children — visit to Malaysia Video statement	June 2015
	Agenda item 3 Report of Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health — visit to Malaysia	June 2015
Independent Human Rights Commission of Afghanistan	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on violence against women	June 2015
Joint statement — Equality and Human Rights Commission; Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and Scottish Human Rights Commission	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on violence against women	June 2015
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health	June 2015
	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights while countering terrorism	June 2015
Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions	Agenda item 3 Forum on Business and Human Rights	June 2015
Procurador de los Derechos Humanos of Guatemala	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders	March 2015
	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the right to food	March 2015
	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment	March 2015
	Agenda item 3 Interactive dialogue on violence against children	March 2015
Commissioner for Fundamental Rights of Hungary	Agenda item 5 Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders	March 2015

Country/institution	Segment	Date
Human Rights Commissioner of Azerbaijan (Ombudsman)	Agenda item 3 Panel discussion on national policies and human rights	March 2015
Australian Human Rights Commission	Agenda item 6 Universal periodic review general debate	March 2015
State of Palestine: Independent Commission for Human Rights	Agenda item 7 The right to movement and travel in the light of the ongoing blockade of the Gaza Strip	March 2015
	Agenda item 7 Housing	March 2015
	Agenda item 7 Children	March 2015
Independent Human Rights Commission of Afghanistan	Agenda item 2 Annual report of the High Commissioner on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan Video statement	March 2015
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights while countering terrorism Video statement	March 2015
Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM)	Annual day of meetings on the rights of the child Video statement	March 2015
Australian Human Rights Commission	Agenda item 6 Universal periodic review general debate Video statement	March 2015
National Human Rights Commission of Mauritania	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery	September 2014
Public Defender of Georgia	Agenda item 3 Panel on the protection of the human rights of persons deprived of their liberty	September 2014
National Human Rights Council of Morocco	Agenda item 3 Working Group on arbitrary detention	September 2014

Country/institution	Segment	Date
National Commission on Human Rights of Kenya	Agenda item 3 Panel on the protection of the human rights of persons deprived of their liberty	September 2014
	Agenda item 3 Panel on accelerating global efforts to end violence against children	September 2014
Human Rights Commissioner of Azerbaijan (Ombudsman)	Agenda item 3 Panel on the protection of the human rights of persons deprived of their liberty	September 2014
Joint statement by 22 A-status national human rights institutions	Agenda item 3 General debate	September 2014
Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission	Agenda item 6 Universal periodic review general debate	September 2014
Equality and Human Rights Commission of Great Britain	Agenda item 6 Universal periodic review general debate	September 2014
	Agenda item 3 Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences Video statement	September 2014
Defensor del Pueblo of Spain	Agenda item 3 Report of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances Video statement	September 2014
Joint statement by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and the Scottish Human Rights Commission	Agenda item 6 United Kingdom's progress at the midpoint of the universal periodic review cycle Video statement	September 2014

Annex II

Engagement of national human rights institutions in the second cycle of the universal periodic review (2014-2015)

Twenty-third session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (2015)

State (under review)	Written contribution for summary (as used)[1]	Oral statement to Human Rights Council during the adoption of the outcome of the universal periodic review of the country concerned (A-status national human rights institutions only)
Mauritania	Yes (A-status)	-
Rwanda	Yes (A-status)	Agenda item 6 (thirty-first session of the Council) Universal periodic review of Rwanda
Nepal	Yes (A-status)	Agenda item 6 (thirty-first session of the Council) Universal periodic review of Nepal
Oman	Yes (B-status)	-
Austria	Yes (B-status)	-
Myanmar	Yes (Not accredited yet)	-
Australia	Yes (A-status)	-
Georgia	Yes (A-status)	-

Twenty-second session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (2015)

State (under review)	Written contribution for summary (as used)	Oral statement to Human Rights Council during the adoption of the outcome of the universal periodic review of the country concerned (A-status national human rights institutions only)
Malawi	Yes (A-status)	Agenda item 6 (thirtieth session of the Council) Universal periodic review of Malawi
Mongolia	Yes (A-status)	Agenda item 6 (thirtieth session of the Council) Universal periodic review of Mongolia
Panama	(A-status)	Agenda item 6 (thirtieth session of the Council) Universal periodic review of Panama
Maldives	Yes (B-status)	-
Bulgaria	(B-status)	-

[1] "Yes" appears only where institutions made written contributions

State (in order of review)	[illegible]	[illegible]
Honduras	(B-status)	-
Croatia	Yes (A-status)	-
Libya	Yes (B-status)	-

Twenty-first session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (2015)

State (in order of review)	[illegible]	[illegible]
Kyrgyzstan	(B-status)	-
Spain	Yes (A-status)	-
Kenya	Yes (A-status)	Agenda item 6 (twenty-ninth session of the Council) Universal periodic review of Kenya
Armenia	Yes (A-status)	Agenda item 6 (twenty-ninth session of the Council) Universal periodic review of Armenia
Sweden	Yes (B-status)	-

Twentieth session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (2014)

State (in order of review)	[illegible]	[illegible]
El Salvador	Yes (A-status)	-
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Yes (A-status)	-
Iraq	Yes (Not accredited yet)	-
Egypt	Yes (A-status)	Agenda item 6 (twenty-eighth session of the Council) Universal periodic review of Egypt
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Yes (A-status)	-

Nineteenth session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (2014)

State under review (SUR)	Written contribution for summary (as used)	Oral statement to Human Rights Council during the adoption of the outcome of the universal periodic review of the country concerned (A-status national human rights institutions only)
Norway	Yes (B-status)	-
Albania	(A-status)	Agenda item 6 (twenty-seventh session of the Council) Universal periodic review of Albania
Portugal	(A-status)	Agenda item 6 (twenty-seventh session of the Council) Universal periodic review of Portugal
Costa Rica	Yes (A-status)	-
Ethiopia	Yes (application under review)	-
Qatar	Yes (A-status)	Agenda item 6 (twenty-seventh session of the Council) Universal periodic review of Qatar
Nicaragua	Yes (A-status)	-

Eighteenth session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (2014)

State under review (SUR)	Written contribution for summary (as used)	Oral statement to Human Rights Council during the adoption of the outcome of the universal periodic review of the country concerned (A-status national human rights institutions only)
New Zealand	Yes (A-status)	Agenda item 6 (twenty-sixth session of the Council) Universal periodic review of New Zealand
Afghanistan	Yes (A-status)	Agenda item 6 (twenty-sixth session of the Council) Universal periodic review of Afghanistan
Chile	Yes (A-status)	-
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Yes (A-status)	-
Slovakia	(B-status) (Accreditation lapsed due to non-submission of documentation)	-

State (duration of review)	Human rights institution (accreditation status)	Oral statement by human rights institution during the adoption of the outcome of the universal periodic review of the country concerned (whether national human rights institution only)
Comoros	Yes (no status with the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights)	-
Uruguay	Yes (no status with the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights)	-

Annex III

Engagement of national human rights institutions in the work of the treaty bodies (September 2014-August 2016)

Committee	Number of States parties reviewed	Number of States parties with a national human rights institution	Submission of information	Hearing
Committee against Torture	31	21	19	11
Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination	26	12	16	12
Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	70	66	28	17
Human Rights Committee	33	26	20	n/a
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women	51	33	9	7
Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families	14	8	2	1
Committee on the Rights of the Child	57	44	39	19
Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	27	16	15	14
Committee on Enforced Disappearances	10	10	3	3
Total	**319**	**236**	**151**	**84**